WE CLAIM:

1.   A method for utilizing server-side entry points in providing diagnostics on-demand, the method comprising:

receiving a request to perform a diagnostic on a client computer;

in response to the request, calling an entry point provided at a server computer for performing functions related to executing a diagnostic, the called entry point operative to provide a configuration file identifying one or more additional entry points at the server computer;

calling a one of the entry points identified in the configuration file to obtain authorization to download a diagnostics module for testing a single hardware component of the client computer;

in response to receiving the authorization to download the diagnostics module, calling a one of the entry points identified in the configuration file to download the diagnostics module; and

installing the diagnostics module once it has been downloaded.

2.   The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

calling a one of the entry points identified in the configuration file to obtain authorization to start execution of the diagnostics module; and

executing the diagnostics module in response to receiving the authorization to start execution of the diagnostics module.

3.   The method of Claim 2, further comprising:

determining whether the execution of the diagnostics module has completed or has been cancelled; and

in response to determining that the execution of the diagnostics module has completed or has been cancelled, calling a one of the entry points identified in the configuration file with results of the execution of the diagnostics module.

4.   The method of Claim 3, further comprising:

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determining whether an error has occurred; and

in response to determining that an error has occurred, calling a one of the entry points identified in the configuration file with an error code corresponding to the error that occurred.

5. The method of Claim 4, further comprising calling a one of the one or more entry points identified in the configuration file to obtain a data file containing installation instructions for the diagnostics module, and wherein installing the diagnostics module comprises installing the diagnostics module according to the installation instructions.

6. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions stored thereon which, when executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform the method of Claim 1.

7. A computer-controlled apparatus capable of performing the method of Claim 1.

8. An apparatus for use in providing diagnostics on-demand, the apparatus comprising:

a server computer configured to provide one or more entry points for use by a client computer when performing diagnostics on-demand, a one of the entry points providing a configuration file identifying each of the other entry points.

9. The apparatus of Claim 8, wherein the entry points comprise network addresses provided by the server computer and wherein a one of the entry points identified in the configuration file comprises a network address at which a data file may be retrieved, the data file identifying and providing instructions for installing one or more diagnostics modules on a client computer.

10.   The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein a one of the entry points identified in the configuration file comprises a network address at which authorization may be obtained from the server computer to download one or more files.

11.   The apparatus of Claim 10, wherein a one of the entry points identified in the configuration file comprises a network address at which the one or more files may be downloaded.

12.   The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein a one of the entry points identified in the configuration file comprises a network address at which authorization may be requested to start a diagnostic test.

13.   The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein a one of the entry points identified in the configuration file comprises a network address that may be called to notify the server computer that a diagnostic test has completed.

14.   The apparatus of Claim 13, wherein a one of the entry points identified in the configuration file comprises a network address that may be called to display an error message relating to the performance of the diagnostic test.

15.   A method for utilizing server-side entry points in providing diagnostics on-demand, the method comprising:
        providing an entry point at a server computer for retrieving a configuration file identifying one or more additional entry points at the server computer for use in providing diagnostics on-demand; and
        receiving a request at the entry point for providing the configuration file, and returning the configuration file in response to the request.

16.   The method of Claim 15, further comprising:
        providing an entry point at the server computer for authorizing the download of one or more diagnostics modules; and

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receiving a request at the entry point for authorization and, in response to the request, determining whether the request is authorized and, if so, authorizing the download.

17.   The method of Claim 16, further comprising:

providing an entry point at the server computer for downloading one or more diagnostics modules; and

receiving a request for a diagnostics module at the entry point for downloading modules and, in response to the request, authorizing the request and transmitting the requested diagnostics module if authorized.

18.   The method of Claim 17, further comprising:

providing an entry point at a server computer for retrieving a data file containing instructions for installing a downloaded diagnostics module; and

receiving a request at the entry point for providing the data file, and returning the data file in response to the request.

19.   A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions stored thereon which, when executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform the method of Claim 18.

20.   A computer-controlled apparatus capable of performing the method of Claim 18.